

New look for Midway's Homestead

Continued from T-1

The swimming pools are just as I remember them. So is the dining room.

That is not true of the rest of the resort, however. The Homestead, established in 1886, is showing its age. The paint is peeling on the blue and white Virginia House. And the stairway leading to the top of the nearby "hot pot," a small hill surrounding a thermal spring, is rickety.

The Homestead has seen better days.

Excel Inter-Financial Corp., a developer based in Orem that bought the resort three years ago, however, is out to change that. The company is giving The Homestead a facelift. The dining room has already been remodeled and added on to. It looks like a New England country inn. The fields that surround it enhance that image. A new chef has stepped on board, bringing a new dinner menu with him, which will be in effect by the end of the month. And the 43 guest rooms are being updated. They will be finished by January if things go according to plan.

Other facilities include tennis courts, a mineral pool, a Jacuzzi, a sauna, and a hot tub.

The Homestead is also making plans for a Thursday night family buffet, which will begin at the end of November and cost \$14.95 per person. Special events include dinner and dancing and a buffet on every holiday; the Yule Fest, Dec. 6-8 at the main lodge, in which homemade arts and crafts and home baked goods will be sold; a Thanksgiving Day buffet; and a New Year's Eve party.

Upcoming winter activities that can be arranged through The Homestead include cross-country ski rentals and snowmobile rentals at nearby Wasatch Mountain State Park, and horse-drawn sleigh rides. Downhill skiing is available at Park City, Deer

Valley and Park West, which are just over the hill from Midway.

Golfing at the state park, and horseback riding will continue until the snow flies.

But it is not the jet set life people are looking for when they come here. The emphasis is on activities for the entire family. "People who come here are looking for solitude and a friendly, homey atmosphere," says Gordon Edgington, marketing director for The Homestead. "They like the peaceful environment, but at the same time can take advantage of all the activities."

Indeed, the peaceful environment is still here, just as I remember it. The autumn air is clear, fallen leaves rustle in the breeze. But I missed two things. There were no hot rolls at lunch, and no ducks in the stream out

back.

Rates for accommodations range from \$36 double occupancy for the Virginia House and the Milk House, to \$53 double occupancy for The Barn. The Guest House Suite, billed as a non-eyemoon suite, is \$66 double occupancy. Rooms don't have telephones, but will soon have satellite TV.

Dinner prices on the new menu range from \$7.25 for spaghetti and meatballs to \$16.95 for filet mignon. The resort is open year-round.

For reservations and more information, call 532-2100, from Salt Lake. From Provo call 377-9149. Others should call (801) 654-1102. The Homestead is located in Midway, which is a few miles west of Heber City. If you've never been there before, don't worry. There are plenty of signs to point you in the right direction.



The dining room, reminiscent of a New England country inn, has been remodeled.

Historic Utah Resort Sold

17 Apr 1986 Wave

Midway. The Homestead, a well-known Heber Valley resort celebrating its 100 year anniversary this year, has been sold for an undisclosed sum to a newly-formed Utah corporation, The Homestead, Inc. Principal shareholders are Carole and Jerry Sanders of Cloudcroft, New Mexico, who will also operate the property.

Most recently owned by Homestead Partners, a partnership of which Excel Interfinancial of Orem was managing partner,

The Homestead was founded in 1886 by Swiss-born Simon Schneitter, who capitalized on its natural hot mineral springs and alpine setting to attract visitors from throughout the western United States. The Homestead is comprised of 43 lodging rooms, two restaurants, indoor and outdoor pools and spas, tennis courts, stables and fishing pond, located on approximately 57 acres.

The Sanders have owned a similar historic resort, The Lodge

at Cloudcroft, New Mexico, since May, 1983, and have previously owned and operated hotel properties in Aspen, Colorado and Zermatt, Switzerland. Originally a railroad destination resort, the 47 room Lodge is located at 9200' atop the Sacramento Mountains 105 miles north of El Paso, Texas. It features one of the world's highest golf courses and the southernmost ski area in the United States.

Established in 1899 and once operated by Conrad Hilton (1932-1935), The Lodge is now considered to be one of the finest country inns in the Southwest. It was recently selected as one of forty-nine Great Inns of America and earlier this year was named by Japan Airlines as one of the most notable hotels in the world.

Asked about future plans for The Homestead, Sanders stated that although specific details were undefined at this time, "Carole and I treasure the family history and spectacular setting of The Homestead, having first visited it in 1975. We want to restore the charm, graciousness and reputation for great food for which The Homestead is historically known. Our first efforts will be to clean the facilities thoroughly, renovate completely

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Homestead

all rooms to their original historical character, remodel the spa facilities and add a health club, and continue to improve our service in the restaurant, for which a new chef - Stuart Houk - has already garnished critical acclaim."

Sanders continued "we are especially excited about the opportunity to participate in celebrating The Homestead's 100th Anniversary, and we expect to do so in as much style as we can muster." He indicated that the date for the celebration is tentatively scheduled for September 20th.

"My family and I are thrilled with the warm reception, positive attitudes and eagerness to learn of The Homestead's current staff. We are equally delighted to be in the Heber Valley, where

we have already been made to feel most welcome."

Prior to the resort business, Sanders owned and operated an international business development firm based in Newport Beach, California, and previously, as Los Angeles - based national advertising agency. He is currently a member of the Board of the New Mexico Hotel & Motel Association, numerous tourism councils and civic organizations, the New Mexico Foreign Trade and Investment Committee, and is immediate past president of Sun Country, USA, a large regional tourism coalition.

The Sanders have two children, Justin (8) and Brandon (5), and will reside in Midway this summer.